



December 10, 2009

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program  
c/o The Department of Conservation  
Office of Sustainability  
801 K Street, MA 24-01  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Guidelines**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program. We appreciate the ability to work with you on this important grant program and provide feedback on the proposed guidelines. This is one of the key funding possibilities for our city to meet its strong GHG reduction goals. Taking the bold steps ahead to address climate change, air quality and water supply is important to Santa Rosa's citizenry. We appreciate your efforts to provide local jurisdictions with guidance and critical capital within today's difficult economy where decreasing resources are available to meet rising demands for policy change and regulation.

The City of Santa Rosa has reviewed the guidelines and has the following comments related to the grant program:

1. On page 4 under the introduction, eligible jurisdictions are listed. Santa Rosa staff supports the current proposal which includes both municipalities and regional governments. Cities in particular need to be able to receive funds directly and not have the additional layer of pass-through at the regional government level.
2. On page 5 in the Additional Requirements section, it will be important not to penalize applicants who are unable to meet all eleven requirements. Very few applications will be able to substantively meet all eleven components. The Strategic Growth Council may want to consider weighting scoring in this section such that strong applications that are able to meet seven or eight of the eleven do not lose points for having a minor amount of inapplicable components in an otherwise comprehensive program.
3. On page 9 of the submittal materials section, please allow cities, such as ours, which may not fall entirely into the Disadvantaged Community determination to focus efforts of a potential grant program on portions of our community which do contain low income neighborhoods.
4. Lastly, beginning on page 12 of the additional requirements, Santa Rosa staff finds the categories and specific questions listed appropriate. These questions will allow both applicants and evaluators to better understand sustainable community program components.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide questions and feedback. Please contact me at (707) 543-4348 if you have any questions regarding the above information. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Strategic Growth Council in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gillian Hayes".

GILLIAN HAYES

City Planner/Environmental Coordinator

Cc: Chuck Regalia, Director Community Development  
Jeff Kolin, City Manager  
City Council